Claims.

1. (currently amended) Butt-joining method comprising:

In two abutting metal strips punching a substantially rectangular slot into both abutments, inserting into said two slots a deformable slug, clinching ~~it~~ said slug into said slots, thereby securely joining said strips.

2. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said slots in both said abutments are keystone shaped instead of rectangular.

3. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said slots in both said abutments have two rounded edges produced by both a punch and a die.

4. (currently amended) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein said strips are of other material ~~then~~ than metal.

5. (original) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 1 wherein a plurality of slots are used.

6. (currently amended) Butt-joining method as defined in claim 2 wherein said keystone shaped ~~slugs~~ slots ~~are~~ also ~~having~~ have ~~said~~ two rounded ~~corners~~ edges produced by both a punch and a die.

7. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method comprising:

In two abutting metal strips punching a substantially rectangular slot into both abutments, using one knock-out-slug from said punching, re-inserting said slug into the center of said abutment, clinching ~~it~~ said slug into said slots thereby securely joining said strips.

8. (original) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said slots in both said abutments is keystone shaped instead of rectangular.

9. (original) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said slots in both said abutments have two rounded edges produced by both a punch and a die.

10. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said strips are of other material ~~then~~ than metal.

11. (original) Buft-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein a plurality of slots is used.

12. (currently amended) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein ~~said~~ clinching height produced by said clinching is flush or slightly below the surface of said strips.

13. (new) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 7 wherein said metal strips are mitered at 45 degrees and abutting at said mitering, with four said mitered strips forming a frame.

14. (new) Butt-joining clinch method as defined in claim 13 wherein during said mitering remnants of said metal strips is purposely left in the mitered corner.